

MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT

Between

DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME (ADFG)

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION (DEC)

And

SOUTHEAST ALASKA REGIONAL DIVE FISHERIES ASSOCIATION (SARDFA)

PURPOSE: The purpose of this document is to memorialize and make clear the agreements reached between the parties regarding the monitoring of PSP in geoduck.

BACKGROUND: Live geoduck sell for a much higher price than those that have been eviscerated. However, growth in live sales has been hindered because of a lack of data regarding levels of paralytic shellfish poisoning (PSP) toxin in geoduck. No historical or trend data has been available and no other shellfishery takes place in geoduck harvest areas to provide needed information. In addition, no pre-harvesting monitoring has been done in order to measure whether or not PSP levels are increasing or decreasing in a given area just prior to harvest. Thus, harvesters are unable to focus their efforts in areas or during times of the year when PSP levels are within the acceptable federal level of 80 ug/100 g.

Recognizing this shortfall in data, a meeting was held on August 5 and 6, 2002 in Anchorage. Participants included members of SARDFA, DEC, U.S. FDA, and well as others whose knowledge about PSP and monitoring program establishment is well known and well respected.

GOAL: The outcome of that meeting was a revised monitoring program for geoduck, which is the starting point to gather data. The goal of the monitoring program is 1) increase live sales; 2) decrease chances for recalls; and 3) longer time frames between sample days during harvesting. All of these goals will ultimately increase the value of the fishery to the state and to SARDFA.

COMMITMENT: By signing this Memorandum of Agreement, the parties agree as follows:

- 1) The data collected will be actively and routinely used by all parties to make decisions about harvest times, areas, and revisions in sampling requirements.
- 2) The data will be posted on DEC's website as soon as technologically feasible after sampling is complete (this is expected to be the same day).
- 3) If disagreements begin to occur, the parties will come together for a face-to-face meeting where the issues of disagreement can be discussed openly and honestly. Any party can suggest that such a meeting take place.
- 4) A best faith effort will be made to follow the monitoring program attached to this MOA, recognizing that there will be some issues that were not anticipated. Each party will work to resolve those matters as quickly as possible. The monitoring plan is incorporated into and is a part of this Memorandum of Agreement.

- 5) A post-harvest season debriefing on what worked and what needs to be changed will take place during the Summer of 2003.

SIGNED AND DATED

SOUTHEAST ALASKA REGIONAL DIVE FISHERIES ASSOCIATION

By Julie Decker, Executive Director

Date

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION

By Janice Adair, Director Division of Environmental Health

Date

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

By Doug Mecum, Director Division of Commercial Fisheries

Date